

about 8 feet apart. On top of these is arranged a lattice-work of light canes placed horizontally. The distance between the canes is quite variable, but is rarely more than a foot. The vines extend horizontally over this framework, and the fruits hang down through it, where they are easily seen and easily gathered. The size of the arbor is quite variable; for a single 'hill' of chayotes it may sometimes be as much as 25 feet in diameter, and often several hills are planted under a common arbor 30 to 40 feet square.

"No tillage is given the soil around the base of the plant, but water is applied frequently in the regions where rainfall is not abundant. At Santa Maria it is said to be the custom to pour a bucket of water upon each hill every day.

"The hill once started will last several years, if not dug for the tubers. These are ready for using at the end of the second season.

"The fruits commence to mature in September. They are most abundant in November and December, but there are still quite a few in the markets as late as the first of March. The Indians do not like to pick chayotes until they are fully mature, as they contend that the fruits have much more flavor at this time than when eaten half-grown or immature. Maturity is indicated by the appearance of the cotyledons in the slit at the apex of the fruit. The young sprout also makes its appearance while the fruit is still on the vine. The Indians of Santa Maria break off the plumule with the finger nail before taking the fruit to market in Guatemala City or Antigua, so that it cannot be used for planting. They fear that chayotes will be grown in other places and they will no longer have a market for their product.

"The mature fruit, when picked, will keep for two or three weeks in good condition. If laid away for a longer time, it gradually shrivels and sends out sprouts. By destroying the plumule, so that the fruit can not sprout, and burying it in the ground, the Indians claim to keep chayotes in good condition for two months.

"The picking season extends over several months, and a large amount of fruit is produced by most varieties. Undoubtedly the different varieties vary in productiveness, yet all of those which are commonly grown in the highlands seem to be satisfactorily productive.

"After the plant has dried up and the fruit has all been harvested, the 'ichintal', or tuber, may be dug if the second season of growth has been completed. Since the tubers bring a relatively high price in the